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Spring 1981

Avon Past



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Line drawing of roof-boss excavated from Keynsham Abbey showing Samson and the Lion.

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Avon Past

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AVON ARCHAEOLOGICAL COUNCIL
and AVON LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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EDITORIAL

It is not too surprising that some local historians find the anxiety with which archaeologists regard metal-detecting as difficult to understand. Most local historians, after all, have not abandoned book, document and map in favour of trowel, tapemeasure and theodolite; and they may not necessarily understand the intricacies of stratigraphy and association, two principles which are so important in archaeological excavation. Nevertheless, archaeology is very much a tool of local history. No local historian seeking to understand the origins of boundaries, settlement patterns, placenames, industrial growth and so on, can afford to ignore the archaeological evidence, and sometimes this is the only evidence.

Therefore, the A.L.H.A.'s action in endorsing the recommendations issued by the South Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries in their *Statement about Metal Detecting and Archaeology* is entirely logical. The A.A.C. have already given it their unreserved support. This document is parallel to that issued by the S.T.O.P. (Stop Taking Our Past) Campaign about which we have reported in our joint *Newsletter*. It is this S.T.O.P. statement which is referred to as "the Joint Statement of the Council for British Archaeology (etc.)" in the recommendations, outlined below:—

"The South Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries therefore:

WELCOMES the adoption of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act and supports the additional protection of scheduled ancient monuments which it considers essential.

WELCOMES the Joint Statement of the Council for British Archaeology, the Museums Association and other archaeological bodies.

RECOMMENDS the adoption of by-laws by local authorities in the region banning the use of metal detectors on land owned by the authority, in line with similar bans already in effect in Bristol and elsewhere.

RECOMMENDS that private landowners in the region be encouraged not to give permission for treasure hunters to work their land, and towards this aim that a copy of this document be sent for circulation to the regional officers of all relevant bodies, e.g. National Farmers Union, County Landowners Association etc.

RECOMMENDS that national and regional organisations involved with archaeology, particularly government departments, be encouraged to take a more forceful attitude towards treasure hunting. Where applicable, both they and private landowners should make greater use of the legal resources and sanctions available to them.

RECOMMENDS that licence holders prosecuted for criminal damage, trespass, or an offence under the forthcoming Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act should have their licences withdrawn and the detectors confiscated (as with gun legislation), furthermore that metal detector clubs should widen their codes of conduct to exclude from membership such individuals.

RECOMMENDS that individuals using metal detectors, who have an interest in antiquities should be encouraged to learn some more about archaeology, local history, and their methods of field research, and to join societies where their

knowledge and enthusiasm can be used to advantage; in particular, parents should be discouraged from purchasing metal detectors for their children but should guide them in the direction of local archaeological societies, museums, clubs and organisations such as Young Rescue where they might acquire a more balanced and fuller understanding of our common archaeological heritage. Any local museum will be able to furnish details of such groups."

It might be of interest to readers to know that amongst the many bodies (often non-archaeological) who have publicly endorsed the national C.B.A./S.T.O.P. statement are included: the three associations for county, district and metropolitan authorities, the British Tourist Board, the National Trust, the Council for Nature, the National Farmers Union and the Countryside Commission. At least two of these – the Association for District Councils and the Council for Nature – have conducted their own independent surveys into metal-detector damage. The matter has now been taken to the Council for Europe by Henry Cleere, the Director of the C.B.A., but the outcome is not yet known.

Georgina Plowright

Jennifer Scherr.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

COMMANDER E. H. D. WILLIAMS' main research interest is the vernacular architecture of the Somerset and South Avon areas. He is a member of the Vernacular Architecture Group and the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, and has published articles in both societies' journals.

HAROLD BROWN graduated from the University of Bristol in 1925, and was history master at Cotham Grammar School from 1940-46. After two years lecturing at the Wimpole Training College, Cambridge, he became an H.M.I. for schools in Worcestershire until 1960. He is the author of *Bristol – England* published by the Burleigh Press.

MRS. PATRICIA LINDEGAARD has recently given up her job to concentrate full-time on the professional researching of enquiries about family history, as well as continuing her other Kingswood researches. She is a member of both the Bristol and Avon and Gloucestershire Family History Societies, is married and has two children.

JEFFREY SPITTAL is Librarian-in-Charge of the Queens Building Library in the University of Bristol. He has been on the A.L.H.A. Executive Committee since the A.L.H.A. was first founded and is currently their Information Officer.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS OF SOMERSET AND SOUTH AVON

by E. H. D. Williams

Historically and geographically the 'new' county boundaries are meaningless, and this is particularly true when it comes to looking at vernacular architecture in the area administered by Woodspring and Wansdyke District Councils forming south Avon. This region is of special interest to the members of the Vernacular Architecture Group who are carrying out research into the traditional buildings of Somerset, and who include south Avon within their sphere of study.

Unfortunately it has not been possible, to date, to study this area as thoroughly as Somerset to the south of the Mendips. Members of the V.A.G. therefore hope to intensify the fieldwork being done in south Avon to confirm or disprove, what is so far a superficial impression, that it appears to be an area in which post-medieval rebuilding has largely replaced earlier buildings; should this be so it would be at variance to the area farther south, where earlier buildings were mainly modified and adapted to provide improved standards of housing.

South Avon is clearly an area of transition between differing styles of houses and differing constructional techniques, and it is therefore necessary to establish the extent to which Somerset types overlap, and are ultimately replaced by, those of south Gloucestershire (now Northavon) and east Wiltshire.

Readers can greatly assist us in this by drawing attention to buildings of potential interest (farm-buildings as well as houses). It is essential to study the interior, particularly the roof, to obtain a full understanding of a building's architectural history, and introductions to owners of such buildings are therefore particularly desirable.

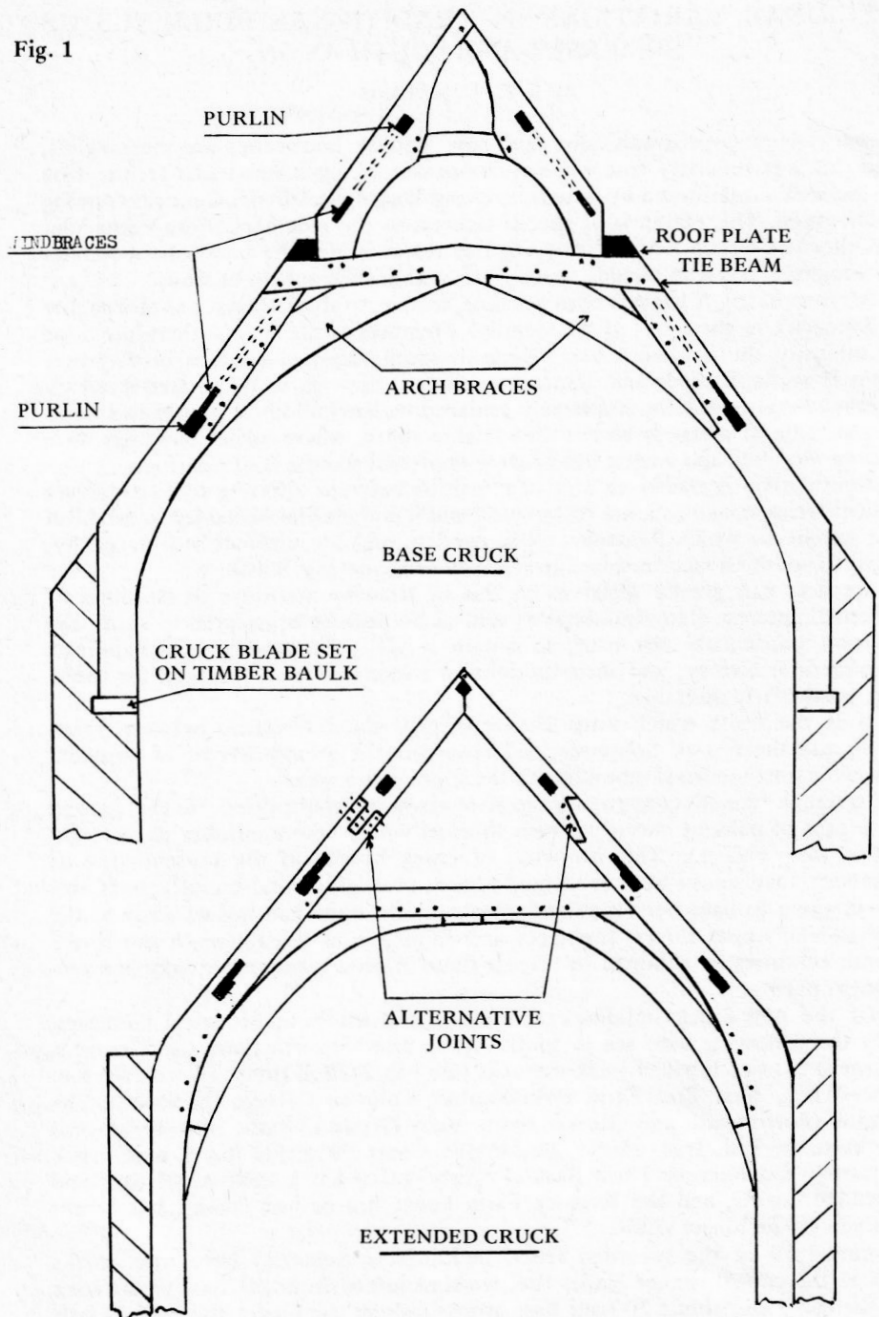
It is the roofs which most clearly display the differences between south Avon and the rest of Somerset, and *inter alia* the greater extent of apparent complete post-medieval rebuilding in the south Avon area.

In cruck-framed construction roof loads were transmitted to the ground by means of pairs of curved timbers (blades) which take a number of different forms (see Fig. 1). The majority of cruck houses in the present area of Somerset have smoke-blackened (and almost invariably wind-braced) roofs; this shows them to have been medieval, single-storey, open hall houses prior to the insertion of upper floors, fireplaces and chimneys in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is hoped to discuss these improvements more fully in a subsequent paper.

Of the 450 cruck buildings recorded in the whole of historical Somerset, only the following nine are in south Avon: Brimbleworth Farm (St. George's, Banwell) has two types of jointed crucks (see Fig. 2); Bell House (Worle, Weston-super-Mare), West End Farm (Winscombe), Coombe Cottage (Backwell), The Grante (Portishead) and Manor Farm Barn (Weston, Bath, now destroyed) all have, or had, true crucks; Birdcombe Court (Wraxall) has a base cruck surviving; the Rectory Farm Barn (Englishcombe) has a mixture of base and extended crucks, and the Rectory Farm house has or had crucks, but details of them are no longer visible.

About 50 of the recorded cruck buildings in Somerset have true crucks (where the curved timber blades rise, without joints, from the base to the apex of the roof) and about 20 have base crucks (where the blades rise only to half way up the roof slope) or extended crucks (where the blades are extended by a

Fig. 1



length of timber added *above* the collar to reach the apex). The latter are mostly used in buildings of high social status and/or of greater than average width, but some occur because of a shortage of adequately long timbers, or from a desire by owners to ape their betters.

The majority however are jointed crucks. These have their origins in the Medieval period, and are peculiar to Somerset, East Devon and West Dorset, where they occur in all classes of buildings.¹ In the jointed cruck the rafter section is jointed near the 'elbow' to the inward-curving tops of the uprights set in the wall. Two types of joint were used, mostly a mortice and tenon pegged through the sides; but a small number have no mortice and tenon and are secured by pegs driven through from the lower face, often supplemented by a 'slip' tenon. These latter are known as face-pegged jointed crucks to distinguish them from the former tenoned jointed crucks. The limits of the distribution of jointed crucks in Devon and Dorset are well established, but to the north remain to be defined. The transition would appear to lie somewhere between the single (known) example at Brimbleworth and the widely scattered hundreds of examples to the south of the Mendips; that is, in the area of south Avon.

In the south Avon area true crucks appear to become predominant, as shown by the several examples listed above, and the high concentration of a dozen or so now recorded in Norton St. Philip and Beckington in the north-east of modern Somerset. True crucks are common in Gloucestershire and in Wiltshire, so that in the comparatively small area of south Avon there must be, or have been, both jointed and true crucks, since changes never occur abruptly. The one face-pegged jointed cruck at Brimbleworth is especially interesting, being an outlier of a rare type found mostly in south Somerset and Devon. Two other isolated examples are known at Westonzoyland and near Castle Cary. The Grange at Portishead has the dual distinction of being both the most northerly cruck in Somerset, and the only house so far recorded in all Somerset where the medieval

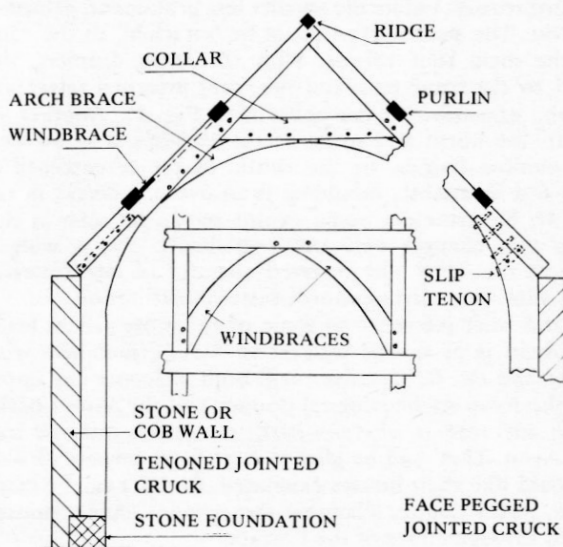


Fig 2

smoke louvre (for escape of smoke from the roof space) has survived sufficiently to show its form of construction (Gilson and Williams 1980, 15). How gradually such changes in regional characteristics occur is also well shown by the distribution of smoking (curing) chambers, in Somerset and south east Devon. These chambers were built adjacent to the kitchen hearth for the preservation of meat and fish, and examples are numerous in both counties, but the layout varies in each. The Devon chambers are much larger than the usual Somerset ones, and are built behind the hearth. In Somerset they are built to the side; the west Somerset chambers often being larger than those in the east (in this respect resembling those in Devon). However two chambers near Taunton were behind the hearth, suggesting that the area from Taunton to the Devon Border is a region of gradual change with considerable overlapping of types (Williams 1976). Smoking chambers are recorded frequently as far north as the Mendips, but except for a few possible survivals in north east Somerset they are not yet recorded in south Avon except at West End Farm, Barton, Winscombe. One has recently been found in the extreme west of Wiltshire and they are reported from south Gloucestershire (now Northavon; Williams 1976, n.3). Being an integral part of the fireplaces, the chambers are all post-medieval, so their apparent absence from south Avon cannot be attributed to the possibly greater extent of complete rebuilding there.

There is also a most noticeable difference in the facades of houses as one travels from south-west Somerset north-eastwards into Avon. Large forward-facing gabled dormers (so characteristic of the Cotswolds) become increasingly frequent, giving houses an elevation that is characteristic of the area. They have been noted as far south as Shepton Mallet, and become increasingly common around Norton St. Philip and Beckington, and in south Avon. This seventeenth century feature appears to have been fashionable only for a limited period, and in the eighteenth century was not infrequently blanked off (if not actually removed) by the addition of a high parapet, as at Old Bowlsh House, Shepton Mallet and The Grange, Beckington. The larger dormer windows involved modifying some of the roof trusses, unlike the smaller less prominent, gabled dormers in the south and west. The smaller type could be 'attached' to the roof slopes without affecting the main roof trusses. With the larger dormers, the collar had to be extended to the front wall, and the front principal rafter shortened and tenoned into the extension of the collar (See Fig. 3). Another variation between the areas to the north and south of the Mendips is to be seen in the mouldings of the window frames. In the south, in the seventeenth century, the typical, though not invariable, moulding is an ovolo, whereas in the north it is an ogee (Fig. 4). Nevertheless, some ovolos are to be seen in the north, once again showing that changes only occur gradually over a wide area. A relatively rare type of moulding, the reserved chamfer of late sixteenth/early seventeenth century date, has a distinct north-eastern distribution.

It is hoped that this brief reference to some of the more salient features has shown why south Avon is of special interest to V.A.G. members working in Somerset. The writer and Mr. R. G. Gilson will both welcome any opportunity to collaborate with the Avon Archaeological Council and the Avon Local History Association, or with any readers of *Avon Past*, in research into the traditional buildings of south Avon. They will be glad to hear from owners of old houses in that area who would like their houses examined. Contact can be made either through Mr. R. Iles, Avon County Planning Department, Avon House North, Bristol 1 (290777) or through either of the Editors.

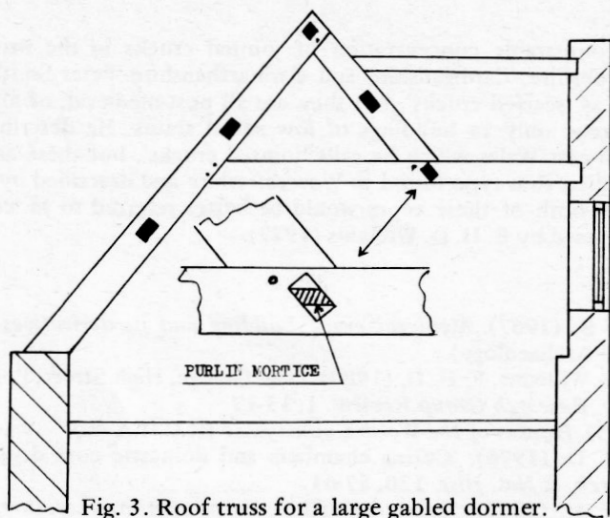


Fig. 3. Roof truss for a large gabled dormer.

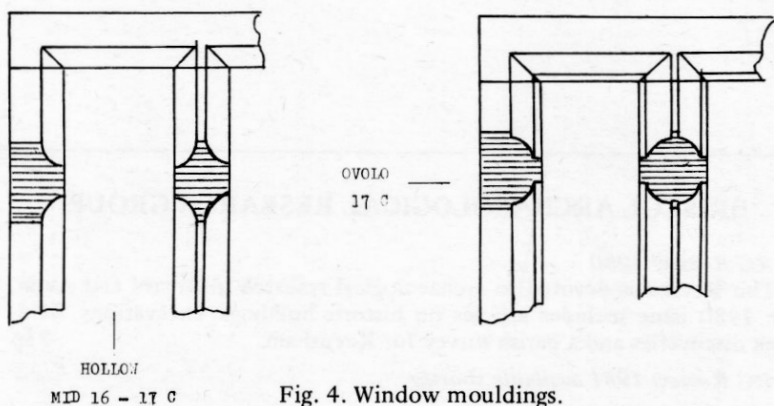
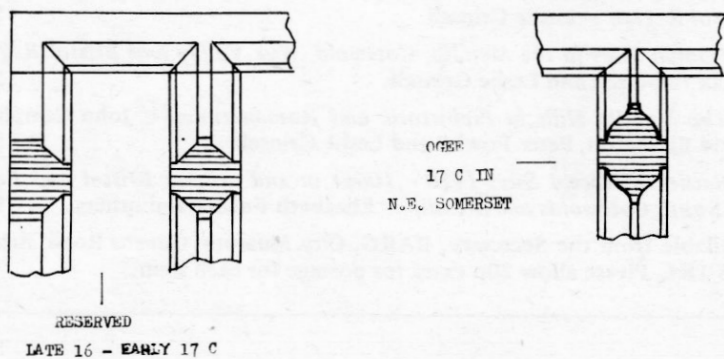


Fig. 4. Window mouldings.



Note

1. The only comparable concentration of jointed crucks in the British Isles occurs in Breconshire, Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire. Peter Smith (1975) refers to these as 'scarfed crucks', but they are all post-medieval, of an inferior quality and occur only in buildings of low social status. He describes a few others in north-east Wales which he calls 'jointed crucks', but these are in fact more closely allied to a type found in Worcestershire and described by F. W. B. Charles (1967); both of these types would be better referred to as 'composite crucks', as discussed by E. H. D. Williams (1977).

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BEATING THE STREETS

by Harold Brown

The phrase "beating the streets" was common enough at one time. In my young childhood (I was born in 1900) one thing which was strictly taboo was the practise of frequenting the streets after dark, a taboo which my mother insisted was firmly observed. In the absence of radio and television, and at a time when gramophones were by no means commonplace, the young naturally turned to the streets for relaxation. There was plenty of scope for inventive activity, both constructive and destructive; the tendency was for the latter kind to be more predominant after dark. Hence the dictat which ran in most law-abiding families that "thou shalt not beat the streets".

1910 was almost the peak period of my participation in the pastimes which dominated the street-playground — a time when such activities were at their busiest, for the internal combustion engine had still to revolutionise traffic. My own birthplace was in Elmgrove Avenue, a cul-de-sac in East Bristol bordering on the railway line to South Wales. Parallel to us was Luxton Street, another quiet cul-de-sac. Both these were at right angles to All Hallows Road, a link between the busy Easton Road and Eastville, but itself fairly quiet. Branching off from All Hallows Road on the other side were Westbourne Road, Eastbourne Road and Graham Road, fairly level streets of artisans' houses each with its own tiny front 'garden' serving merely to separate the house front from the pavement. Beyond them again were Eve Road and Belton Road, sloping downwards to the valley level of Chaplin Road which was their further boundary.

Thus we had every opportunity for variety in our street activities. For top-spinning, marbles, hop-scotch and such-like games the cul-de-sacs were ideal; for 'knock-up-ginger' and 'bedlam' both Eastbourne Road and Graham Road were suitable, but when it came to 'trollies', then the slopes of Eve Road and Belton Road came into their own. In 1980 it is probably necessary to elucidate a little, for even the names of some of those games are being lost. Top-spinning usually started in early spring. The 'tops' were of various shapes, some cone-shaped, some with a central peg with a slightly wider flat top (known as flyers) and other little more than a heavy cylinder of wood about three inches in diameter, with the usual metal peg hammered into the chamfered base. The heavy ones were quite expensive items, usually the property of boys with above-average pocket money. They spun sedately and purposefully, their momentum preserved with strokes from a fairly heavy whip with a leather thong. For the average boy, however, peg-tops and flyers were more usual. They could be bought for a penny or two-pence, and a whip could be made from any piece of wood and some strong string. The 'flyers' could be made to leap in the air several feet, so were not very popular with householders with glass windows to consider.

'Tip-cats' were a cheap alternative to tops. Any piece of wood about two to three inches long and a half to one inch square could be made into a tip-cat. The ends were sharpened to a blunt point. The 'cat' was laid on the pavement and one end struck with a baton; this caused it to fly up in the air, and the player struck it forcibly in mid-air with his baton, sending the potentially dangerous missile hopefully on an unimpeded flight. Learners at the game could be lethal!

Marbles could be bought quite cheaply and in great variety, from the cheapest 'clay' less than half an inch in diameter to 'tawlers' of perhaps over an inch,

with coloured glass whorls visible within. The simplest game was 'follow-on'. Player number one threw his marble three or four feet along the gutter; when it came to rest, player number two aimed his marble at it. If he struck it, he claimed it; if he missed, his own marble must be thrown with sufficient force to roll ahead far enough to be out of range of number one, who took up the running from the point where his marble rested. It was quite possible to win, or lose, quite a number of marbles on the way to school! Those who preferred a more static game could set up in the 'dummy' business. The 'dummy' was a wooden peg about two or three inches long, used as a bung in beer barrels. It was set up in front of a wall, and players stood at a chalk line marked on the surface of the road at an agreed distance, and then 'fired' at the dummy. All misses became the property of the dummy owner. A successful shot meant he had to pay out as many as four or five marbles to the customer. 'Glassers' were popular in this game — the glass balls then supplied in lemonade bottles, and which sealed them by gas pressure from the lemonade against a rubber ring in the bottle neck. Such bottles are now collector's pieces. Instead of a dummy, some enterprising players used a 'molly', a flat piece of wood with sections cut out of it like a series of arches. The apertures ranged in size from one end of the molly to the other. Over the smaller ones a number as high as 5 might be painted; over the larger ones relatively smaller numbers. Again the players operated from an agreed chalk line, and flicked the marbles at the molly with finger and thumb. Molly owners usually won pretty heavily.

Hop-scotch was more of a girls' game, and playing with hoops was also considered to be more suitable for girls than boys.

'Knock-up-ginger' was a more anti-social activity requiring more space for the players to make a successful getaway, and was preferably played after dark. A group of three or four players would agree on a list of householders who were to be "knocked up". The group would assemble at the gate of a chosen house while the 'knocker' rapped loudly at the door; then everyone scampered for cover — usually under the privet bushes which were about the only plants hardy enough to survive in front gardens. If the householder was particularly abominated, he might be subjected to continued attacks, though the danger of ambush to the next 'knocker-up' grew steadily greater.

The operation of 'trolleys' was an exciting prospect if one could acquire an old perambulator. The smaller pair of wheels was mounted on a centre pin at the front of a wooden platform, steering being effected by means of a length of rope attached to each end of the axle. The rear pair of wheels was fastened securely with a couple of steel bolts. Except with the most sophisticated outfits, there were no brakes except those provided by foot pressure against the rims of the wheels. Eve Road and Belton Road sloped well enough to provide sufficient momentum, and were short enough to ensure that the momentum did not get entirely out of hand. There were often overturnings at the end of a run, and sometimes collisions with cyclists or unwary or slow-moving pedestrians; but, strangely, I never heard of any major accident, even though the variety of horse-drawn vehicles using these side roads was considerable.

The dairyman's milk float was one of the most common of these vehicles, for several competitors shared in the twice-daily rounds of the area, including a Mr. Burge, who operated from a small yard at the corner of Eastbourne Road. The milk float was a two-wheeled cart with an especially low slung axle, to enable the floor to be constructed only a foot or so from the ground so that the heavy milk churns could be lifted in and out easily. Those were days before

milk bottles, so beside a couple of ten-gallon churns with gleaming brass covers, the dairyman had a small two-gallon carrier, which accommodated his half-pint scoop from which he measured out his wares into customers' jugs. The serving was always done with a flourish; first the main contents of the scoop-measure were decanted into the jug from a height of anything from a foot to a yard; then an extra topping-up splash was added for good measure. The size of the topping-up splash often decided the size of a dairyman's round. A low step only an inch or two above ground level enabled the dairyman to board his slowly-moving float with ease, even when carrying a heavy can; it also enabled small boys to sneak a short ride occasionally. On the whole, though, dairymen were kindly souls, and often a small child, boy or girl, would be given a free ride in the float as it slowly passed on its way. The horses needed little attention; they grew to know their round by habit and would plod on with only a mere word or click of the tongue for encouragement. For tradesmen starting up in business there was always available the hand-propelled milk cart — often quite an attractive example of the wheelwright's art — while large ornamental churns mounted on a metal frame could be used for bulk transport.

The baker's cart was probably the next most frequent user of the streets. Daily door-step deliveries were commonplace. Four-wheeled vehicles were often used, but more frequently a two-wheeled type of gig was used with a collapsable hood in case of sunny or wet weather. Coal and coke were delivered in hundred-weight sacks from lorries so built that the floor was about at shoulder level, enabling the delivery man to handle his loads more easily. Prices varied, though good household coal could often be obtained at two shillings or half a crown the hundredweight. Even soft drinks were delivered at the customer's door. Pickup's of Ashley Down delivered half-gallon stoneware jars of various non-alcoholic drinks at ridiculously low prices, but even they were driven off the market when 'monsters' — large pint bottles — of lemonade were offered at two pence each.

At longer intervals other vehicles appeared on the streets. The knife-grinder-cum-pot-mender was a fairly frequent visitor, always a source of interest to children. Mounted on a rough framework between the two main wheels of his machine were: a small platform on which he would sit, a large wooden driving wheel revolved by pressure on two foot-pedals, a spindle upon which were mounted several grinding and polishing wheels, and a small bench equipped with files, hammers, pincers, anvil etc. for small repairs. For a few coppers the operator would undertake to sharpen scissors or knives, mend cast iron or tin pots, or solder holes in tin kettles or saucepans. His activities were varied and often spectacular.

Mechanical pianos were trundled around, usually by hand, but sometimes drawn by a small donkey. The operator would grind out a small programme of tunes on his instrument, usually hired by the day, then hopefully wait for coppers from kindly householders. It must have been a thin living at best, and it had disappeared altogether by about 1914. 'Rag and bone men' still pushed their carts around, willing to exchange for a toy balloon or a paper windmill a few old rags or bottles, or even to pay a few pence in cash for more readily disposable household refuse which could be sold in turn at the wholesale rag and bone merchant's yard in town. There were special vendors, however, prepared to call at long intervals to collect more valuable cast-off clothes, in return for pottery 'seconds'. One such visitor in our street was Mrs. Toti, wife of a ne'er-do-well Italian immigrant, who scraped some sort of a living in warmer

summer weather when the streets were comfortably aired, by selling ice cream, prepared in his insalubrious dwelling in the remote fastnesses of Dean Lane. I still own some quite attractive ornaments acquired by my mother from Mrs. Toti way back in about 1905.

The consideration of hand-carts reminds me of the fact that some operators supplied a service by lending out such carts for a few pence per hour. One such was a Mr. Boulton, who ran an establishment near the Easton pit, near the end of Felix Road. Mr. Boulton's stock in trade comprised about a dozen stout hand-carts built specially for transporting single hundredweights of coal, and a further half-dozen or so larger carts capable of dealing with bulkier loads such as sacks of coke. On Saturday mornings, when boys were home from school it was necessary to be at Boulton's by 7 a.m. to secure a cart. To arrive late meant joining a queue waiting for the return of carts by earlier users, and that involved several wasted hours. Successful customers paid their twopence or threepence and raced off with the cart either to Stapleton Road or Lawrence Hill stations for coal straight from the truck, or to the Eastville Gas Works where coke was served hot from the retorts. Coal varied from 1/6 to 2/6 per hundredweight; coke was usually available for a shilling or thereabouts. When the load had been dragged home and deposited, the cart was hastily returned to Boulton's, for an extra charge was made if it were kept for over an hour. There were often quite violent scuffles at the hiring point, where waiting customers tended only to observe the rule: 'success to the strongest'.

Heavier traffic in our area was confined to All Hallows Road and Easton Road. Here heavier brewers' drays drawn by two magnificent heavy horses could often be met, together with the multifarious wagons carrying building materials and manufactured goods of all kinds. But the heaviest goods were already being dealt with by steam wagons, with either steel or solid rubber shod wheels, and a stumpy upright boiler up front, behind which huddled a driver who must have been half broiled as he both fed and guided his voracious machine. The comparatively new 'Foden' steam wagon, with small horizontal boiler, was outstripping the older machines both by virtue of their efficiency and their more graceful appearance. Breakdowns were comparatively few — probably no more than among horse-drawn vehicles; though fatalities among the horse population were hurried quickly off the streets by the employees of Messrs. Cole and Co., who operated a knacker's yard in town. A dead horse never cluttered the streets for long. Coles' cart would arrive promptly on request; the carcass would be windlassed up over the axle tree, the head tied in a sack, the legs fastened together with a rope, and away trundled the remains of another of man's faithful servants, to be disposed of profitably even in death.

Road surfaces varied considerably from good to appallingly bad, according to type of traffic using them. Before the days of tar-spraying, road surfaces broke up fairly readily, producing a fine white dust in summer, and a dismal gluey mud in winter. Our local roads were fairly good, except for one route, from Easton coal pit to the Deep Pit at Whitehall. For some reason the product of the Easton pit needed to be transported to the Deep Pit for disposal, and to accomplish this, steel-shod traction engines were used to haul huge trailer wagons, each loaded with many tons of coal. After leaving the Easton pit at Felix Road these monsters met their first incline at Westbourne Road; then wheels began to slip and the road surface was torn apart. In winter time it was commonplace to see a maintenance man dragging a road scraper from side to side of the road, pro-

ducing a veritable river of mud in the gutter to be collected later by Council mud carts. The ruts in the road were often inches deep. No wonder galoshes were popular among pedestrians.

Another road surface was the wooden block variety, though these were confined to a few main roads at or leading to the town centre. A bed of concrete was used as foundation, and on this were laid the wooden blocks with the under side dipped in hot tar. The resultant surface was smooth and slightly resilient, producing less noise from the traffic using it, but it was subject to one overriding objection. After a spell of hot weather the blocks tended to dry out. A sudden thunderstorm would set them awash and they swelled up, raising huge blisters several yards across, which brought traffic to a complete standstill. I remember one such occurrence at Zetland Road round about 1914.

Tarring of road surfaces began around 1910. The first experiments were very simple. A tank of liquid tar on wheels was trundled by horse power to the road to be treated. A gang of perhaps half-a-dozen workmen was provided with buckets and long-handled brooms. The buckets were filled from the tank with hot tar, which had to be brushed on the road surface before it congealed. It was then covered with a layer of sand. Very soon the buckets were superseded. A force-pump was attached to the tar-tank, and from it led a long hose at the end of which was a metal tube with a spray nozzle. This tube was operated by a workman who swung it backwards and forwards in a scythe-like motion, stepping slowly backwards as each area was sufficiently sprayed. It was a mere step from this to almost complete automation. The tar-tank became much bigger and was towed behind a small steam-roller which provided all the motive power. At the rear of the tank the tar was sprayed from a long tube which stretched right across the vehicle, drappings of heavy sacking preventing spray from the tar contaminating everything in the vicinity. With such equipment the speed of operations was immensely increased. The leading steam-roller towing the tar-sprayer moved along at a spanking pace, and was followed by a couple of horse-drawn wagons from which workmen scattered the surface sand by the shovelful. In fact speed of operation outstripped normal safety precautions. I well remember a team of operators descending upon our area. The driver of the steam roller must have been somewhat inebriated, as this offered the only explanation of his reckless progress. His machine collided with almost every available obstacle. There were two stone horse-troughs in the neighbourhood, and both were struck from their foundations, that outside the 'Hit or Miss' public house suffering a peculiarly direct 'hit'.

Easton streets were, I think fairly typical of those in most of the industrial parts of the town. Street lamps were lit at sundown, and extinguished in the early morning hours by lamplighters specially employed by the City Corporation. At the turn of the century many oil lamps were still in use, and the lamplighter plodded on his round bearing a ladder which he had to climb at each lamp-post. When gas lighting came in the ladder was no longer needed, and the lamplighter carried instead a long steel rod, from the end of which protruded a burning wick, protected from the wind by a perforated brass guard. The gas tap was turned on, the flick of a finger produced a side-long flame from the top of the pole, and the gas was ignited. The first burners were of the batwing type, and gave but poor illumination. Then came the upright mantles, quickly followed by clusters of inverted mantles. These were much preferred both on the score of cost and because a much greater proportion of the light produced was cast downwards where it was wanted.

Few streets were without a shop of some sort — usually a general store providing anything likely to find a sale — matches, pins, pegs, groceries, green-grocery, firewood and paraffin among the rest. Often these shops were run for mere pittance by widows or maiden ladies trying to eke out their meagre income. Such a one existed at the corner of our Avenue, owned in succession by Mrs. Palmer and then by Miss Bishop; but the extra farthings on each item necessary to cover the overheads kept inpecunious customers away, and the living was a meagre one. Sometimes, however, a forceful character built up a thriving business which brought in a good income — for instance Gibb's of Woodborough Street was quite a lively store. Sacks of dried peas, split peas, lentils, oats, sugar, and potatoes stood around the floor space. Behind the counters were large canisters full of tea and coffee — often blended on the premises. Blocks of butter, lard and dripping, drums of treacle, sides of bacon, tins of biscuits with glass covers, rows of glass jars containing pickles or sweets, and a huge range of other goods festooned the shelves. Each customer's needs were personally attended to. A half-pound of butter was taken from the block, beaten into a neat pat, stamped on the surface with a cow, swan or sheaf of wheat, and wrapped in grease-proof paper. Beans, peas, flour were scooped from the sack, weighed in view of the customer, and served up in cones of stiff paper deftly rolled by the shop-keeper. Sugar was always packed in cones of blue paper. Pickles and liquid items were decanted into customers' own jam-jars. Those were the days of far less useless packaging, and far more customer attention.

At the other end of the scale was the shop at the corner of Graham Road, run by a widow named McNeil. She had little capital to invest in idle stock, and so specialised in small items with a ready sale — mostly sweets for school children. On display in her shop window were bulls' eyes, owls' eyes, small packets of chewing gum, liquorice in the form of pipes, strips, tubes or what-you-will, boiled sweets at twopence per quarter pound, tops, whips, lengths of rope, small boxes of coloured chalks and many other items. Many were priced at only a farthing or half-penny — and that at a time when there were 240 pence to the pound. Mrs. McNeil's living can never have been a fat one.

There were other wonderful experiences lying in wait for us children when, as we grew older, we ventured farther afield into town, travelled on tram cars, caught tiddlers in Cumberland Basin in the very shadow of ocean-going ships moored near the Tramways Centre; but that is another story. Enough has been said for comparisons to be made. In 1980 we have difficulty in visualising conditions applying in 1910. It is certain not all the changes have been for the better.



Our apologies to the Clevedon and District Archaeological Society, whose member Mrs. Sheila Sunderland provided the issue 3 crossword, whose name we accidentally printed as the Clarendon and District Arch. Soc.!

(Crossword in this issue courtesy of J.S.).

The editors would be pleased to receive crosswords from any enthusiasts who would like to send us one.

THE UNDERGROUND MEN: A PERSONAL VIEW OF THE KINGSWOOD COLLIERS

by Patricia Lindegaard

In the days when boys went down the Kingswood mines, girded with tugger and chain, and the only illumination was provided by the pale flames of their tallow candles, they used to push the coal trucks with their heads. How do I know? I had it from my father, and he had it from his grandfather Burchill, collier, whose long white beard was offset by the friction-bald proof of a shiny head, naked as a ball. In the evening of his life "Granfer used to crack stones, 6d a square foot. I used to 'ave to go down an read to un on a Sunday, out of the Bible", my father remembers fondly, "'E couldn't read or write". My father, himself now nearing eighty, is a great teller of tales, their authenticity enlivened by the richness of his broad Kingswood speech, with its "thees" and "thous" and "bists" and "custs".

From him, I learned too of his own father, shoe-maker and part-time barber, who used to sit the neighbourhood children on a little stool in his back garden, shearing their locks by the simple method of scissors and pudding basin. When my grandfather got to work on his own son's angelic mop, which cascaded over his shoulders in whorling, bouncing, golden curls, the female members of the family cried for a week at the waste of so much beauty.

My grandfather had, however, a greater claim to fame. He had once fought Jack Johnson, heavy-weight champion of the World. It was by no means as grand as it sounds. Johnson, after a chequered career which had caused him to flee the States in somewhat dubious circumstances, was making a tour of the Music Halls. He duly fetched up at the Empire Theatre, Bristol, where he was to be seen strutting about the stage — which they said he could cover with four giant strides — bellowing out a challenge to all comers. Grandfather's family, the Pillingers, fancied themselves with their fists. (Was there not another story of a bare-knuckle fight in the middle of Two Mile Hill, between one of them and a butcher called Billy Jefferies, over the disputed ownership of some pigs? The duel apparently left both contestants bloodied but unbowed, and the quarrel was later solved by both parties retiring for liquid refreshment. The pigs got eaten). However, to return to the story. On the one hand we have the mighty figure of Jack Johnson, roaring out his challenge, and my grandfather, never one to resist a dare, ("outta devilment" says my Dad) setting to. I suspect he came off rather ignominiously, despite at the time being "a gurt big chap, about fifteen stone".

In hard times my father was a customer at Swashes Pawn Shop with his little sailor suit (and the straw hat) he wore to church on a Sunday carefully pressed and parcelled under his arm to be left as a pledge for a few coppers to help his mother through the week. It was always redeemed in time for the following Sunday services. When he grew out of the sailor suit, it was "down to Froggy 'Armon's mother for a pair of 'cut me downs' — poor old Froggy, he got killed in the First World War".

Then there was my father's mother, Laura Hester, who, like her husband, had a part-time occupation. She could charm warts, and ministered her witchcraft to the neighbours with slivers of raw meat and incantations. Whatever she said or did, the spells satisfied her customers, who by all accounts became wart-free in a matter of days. Grandmother Lavinia was another character.

"Terrible 'ot temper, she 'ad, and strong! She was the only 'oman I knew as could kill a pig!" (This extraordinary sideline seems an unbelievable contrast to her intricate and accomplished dress-making, evident in photographs of her children.)

Then there was the story of the boy relation who stole a horse, "a hanging offence in those days", my Dad would say with satisfactory relish, putting the matter at a stroke outside the region of his memory and into the realm of hearsay. The boy did not hang. Somehow he escaped from the Pound where he had been locked up overnight, showed a clean pair of heels for Liverpool and took a boat for America. He was never heard of again.

My father's stories were much more thrilling to me than the Congress of This or That, the Battle of Here or There that I learned about at school (and which seemed so remote that they might have taken place in the stratosphere), so at about twelve years old I went in search of local history. The printed histories revealed nothing to add to my rich store of tales. The absence of the family names in the indexes led to the empty discovery which attacked me with face-burning shock that I was descended from nonentities. Even a gleaned nodding acquaintance with the Cock Road Gang, the execution of Fry and Ward, or the flesh-creeping exhibit of a book labelled "bound in the skin of a Kingswood murderer" did not compensate for my dismay. If I had known the truth it might have been even worse. Fry and Ward were hardly the scar-faced villains, nor yet the dashing highwaymen of my pubescent imagination. Many years in the future I was to know them as they really were, a pair of unsuccessful burglars aged ... nineteen and twenty. Horwood, whose hide covered the grisly relic, I was later to feel quite sorry for — but that was yet to come. Let down by my ancestors, I replaced the books with a sickening sense of disappointment. Why hadn't some of them been hanged? Notoriety, even vicarious, had appealed mightily to my own urgent insignificance. My father tried to comfort me that they had taken part in years of undetected crime, but nothing could overcome my despondency. Raging in silent fury, I gave up history in disgust in the first year of my teens.

As with the craving for nicotine, a lust for history is never quite overcome. In subsequent years I could never see a textbook without first examining the index to see if my name appeared. As the years went by, my disappointment lessened. Now I expected nothing; and nothing was what I found.

Incredibly, a quarter of a century went by before quite by chance I was to spot the signpost which would at last point the way. The discovery that there were records available of the common man was literally monumental. When least expecting it, and at a time when my mind was wholly bound up in the present — I was pushing a pram containing my three under-fours through Brislington churchyard, my eyes chanced upon my own name on a tombstone. There had, it seemed, once been Pillingers in Brislington in profusion, and being of a marginally richer variety than my Kingswood lot, they had had the foresight to have their names inscribed on their gravestones, just so I could find them. A word with the vicar, and I moved into the Aladdin's cave of parish records. In an instant I reverted to the eager hopeful innocent I had been before my teenage disillusion.

Thus through tracing my ancestors, I began piecing the family together, and bit by bit, armed with the nucleus of my father's stories, I traversed every branch in an extraordinary adventure in time. My entire paternal ancestry, except for one line, the Fray family, Dutch brassmakers of Keynsham, proved

to be Kingswood colliers. Pillinger, Burchill, Garland, Brain, Summerill, Stone, Lear — their names leapt at me from the old manuscripts. I shared at second hand their hardships, grieved with them in the loss of their children (one Pillinger family lost eight out of their ten children from smallpox, seven of them within a matter of months); agonised with both the victim and the dependants of those who fell to their deaths or were drowned in coal pit accidents. I realised that my family was a microcosm of all the colliers of the Northern coalfield of Bristol. I saw reflected in the mirror of my own ancestry the coal-blackened face, the badge of blue scars on hands, arms, back and knees, the broken body of every collier who had ever lived, loved, suffered and died within the confines of the ancient forest which had become a coalfield.

"These black bigots" a self-styled 'gentleman' of Bristol called them with, it seems to me, little or no justification, in an attack he penned in 1714, recounting with undisguised glee how the colliers' half-clothed children had run as far and as fast as they could beside his Bristol-bound coach, begging pennies.

There is no doubt that human nature hates what it fears. The outsiders in their forest home were inclined to use their coal as a political weapon; the conditions in which they existed were deplorable and just to prove that they wouldn't go away, lie down or die, they frequently rioted, an activity which not altogether surprisingly put the fear of God into the timid Bristolians. 'The lawless colliers' is a phrase of which I was soon to tire; an often repeated instance of their savagery is the tale whereby a couple of bailiffs were put forcibly down a coal-pit in 1795, supplied with gin and gingerbread, kept in the dark overnight, and forced to buy their release for 6/8d. The fact that at roughly the same time the French Revolutionaries were guillotining their enemies makes this treatment seem almost laughably lenient. Historian after historian has accepted the lawlessness — and it did certainly exist — but has lumped the colliers whose offences we would term political protest together with the petty criminals and tarred the lot with the same brush; no-one before troubled to find out who was who, or who did what. Only occasionally were they named.

It was not all mayhem. Only recently I discovered a fascinating story of a man who sold his wife to a Kingswood collier for thirty shillings. The woman accepted the arrangement and lived with the collier, happily perhaps, until his death.

I am compiling an index of the names of the coalmining people of South Gloucestershire (now of course Avon) from 1600 to 1936. I can trace family connections with the Kingswood coalfield all the way from Edmund Stone, "colyer" of Hanham, described in 1608 as taller than average physique and suitable for army service as a pikeman (should the need arise), right down to my uncle, Joseph Comley, who was a miner in Speedwell pit in the 1930's.

My index, hopefully the prelude to a book on the subject, is entitled "The Underground Men". The title I owe to an un-named hack on the *Bath Journal* in 1749. He describes how a party of bailiffs went into Kingswood to arrest "one Harborough, alias Reynolds, a collier, one of the underground men" for being one of the leaders of the turnpike riot. Harborough put up a spirited defence, fought off his assailants with pitchfork and stones — and escaped. I would be grateful to anybody who could help with photographs, documents, letters, diaries or any newspaper references to anyone who was a coalminer in the Kingswood Forest area — and of course I would be happy to answer questions from anybody who has connections with the district.

A great many of the 'wild ruffians', 'lawless savages' and 'black bigots'

have now been given back their names. What started as a family history has become a crusade to redeem the reputations of my Kingswood men and their women. I have named them. Some of them I know, even though the dust of centuries separates them from me. For each instance of cruelty I know another of loyalty and courage. Those I do not admire, I at least understand.

Mrs. D.P. Lindegaard, 49, Clayfield Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 4NH.
(Please include s.a.e. with any correspondence).

Plate 1



George Garland



Charles Lewis

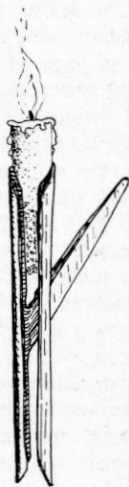
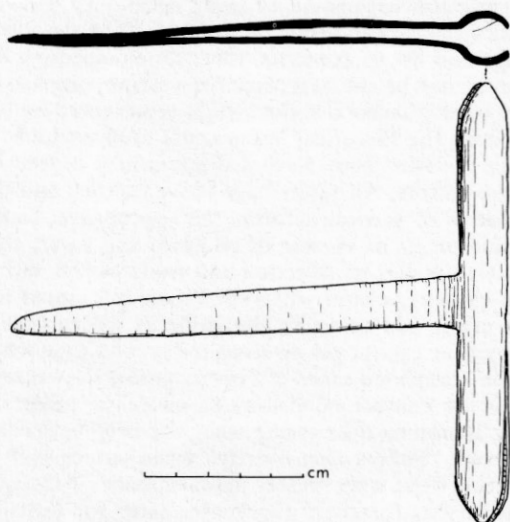
Plate 1. Detail from lithographed broadsheet issued to raise money after five Kingswood boy miners were trapped underground for six days in 1833. Both boys carry candleholders in their hats and George Garland is wearing a chain 'tugger' around his waist with which he would pull coal trucks. The text on the broadsheet runs as follows:

"By the breaking in of the water at Kingswood Lodge Coalpit near Bristol, these Five Boys were shut in for six nights and days entirely destitute of food. They entered on Friday evening, April 18th, 1833, and were rescued on the following Thursday evening. The circumstances of their preservation and of their deliverance, call for peculiar acknowledgements. This rough sketch of the Lads in their pit costume, is intended as a memorial; and by the sale of the impressions, with charitable donations, they will be apprenticed to some plain trade. The monies received for this purpose, are deposited with Mr. Hall, Lower Castle Street, Bristol.

*The parents pray'd above,
The children pray'd below,
The mother's frantic love,
The father's manly woe, —
With wrestling strife, shook earth & air,
And moved the very stones to pray'r.*

*Behold the captive free
The mourners now rejoice,
With grateful ecstasy,
Let Kingswood raise her voice;
And all her deep, dark pits resound,
The dead are raised, the lost are found".*

(Broad sheet in possession of Mrs. P. Lindegaard).



GAW

Fig. 5. Miner's candle holder from the Kingswood area. The atmosphere in the pits was sufficiently clean to make the use of a bare flame possible.

(In possession of Mrs. P. Lindegaard).

CHURCH AND CHAPEL GUIDES: SOME REFLECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

Part 1: Churches.

by Jeffrey Spittal

Too often do church guides obscure the fact that a church is something more than a building with a history. Many guides which exist today, and even more which have been produced in the past, are weighted towards observations on architectural styles historically considered, or towards lengthy recitals of the past workings of ecclesiastical administrations. Both matters are of interest in their own right but, treated together and forming the principal emphases in a work primarily intended for 'lay' readers, they do not serve to demonstrate the concept of a building, served by clergy, with both building and clergy linked to the needs of a community of people. Moreover this 'community' is not to be thought of as synonymous with 'congregation'. A building, a manner of guiding human life, and a local community itself are together 'the church'. To some it may perhaps appear better to speak of the church and clergy as being subordinate to the needs of the community, but to do so would hardly be an accurate reflection of the total legacy of Anglicanism. When dealing with chapels, as a subsequent article will do, this question of distributed authority becomes one of greater importance and indeed fundamentally changes the very nature of the document required as an introduction to the particular place of worship concerned.

It seems therefore an appropriate use of space to give these concepts of history and community some practical expression of living continuity. On the first page of a church guide, confronting the reader as he turns back the cover and preceding even the title-page and list of contents, there should appear a list of services. The inside of the cover may be the best place for a simple diagram of the church with the chronology of architectural styles clearly represented by the period shading conventions used by the Historical Monuments Commission¹. A note on the dedication could be included here. Such a diagram may indeed be all that will be required by some visitors. All tastes have to be satisfied and the purpose of a well-designed guide is to provide information appropriate, so far as space will allow, to the requirements of visitors of all kinds and to set that information out in a manner which makes its selection and study easiest, either during a perambulation of the church, or later when the visitor has closed the door behind him: in fact one might add to make the guide as informative a compensation as possible if the visitor cannot get in! Even today, at a time when the appropriate volume from the completed series of Pevsner guides has become indispensable luggage for a growing number of visitors to churches, he or she whose only objective in calling is not to miss seeing what the neighbours saw last year still has to be remembered. "Follow after charity" when serving such as those; but for more robust spirits, blest with greater independence of thought and incited by more laudable reasons for their pilgrimage, cater for them at greater length later in the text. Between these two extremes there is the majority who, when visiting a village for the first time, enter the church they find there out of a diffuse sense of propriety and obligation which they would be both embarrassed and perplexed to be asked to define.

A stimulus to engaging the interest of that majority would be to draw atten-

tion next to the environs of the church. Indicate its situation in the village relative to areas of human settlement or else to some significant physical feature of the local landscape. Footpath approaches and the shape of the churchyard would be appropriate matters for comment here, together with any notes on the abandonment of an earlier site, changes in the parish boundary or even in the location of the community the church was built to serve. The role of the church as principal landowner in past times should also not escape attention and the former extent of glebe-lands and the management of those lands could usefully receive comment at this point. It is this section of the guide which in short should embrace some of the history of ecclesiastical administration.

Now turn to architecture; first from the outside and then meaningfully from within. Offer some brief observations on the stone used in the building², on the presence of local features of architectural style and also that deferred extended commentary on the principal points of architectural interest — at least so far as they can be studied externally — for it is a somewhat odd, but easily verifiable, tendency of many church visitors, to confine their inspection exclusively to the interior of the building. The lessons of the exterior, perhaps more easily learnt, are too often neglected.

The interiors of churches are dealt with in most church guides in one of three ways. The first is what may be described as the 'chronological approach' which deals with examples of architectural styles, one period after another, wherever they occur within the building. The visitor is bounced like a tennis-ball from chancel to nave, from nave to tower, and from tower down again to crypt in the larger edifices. This method, apart from taxing physical endurance, patience and comprehension is the one surest to reinforce any conceptions of the church as a historical monument or archaeological museum. For that reason, if for no other, it should be avoided. The second method is the 'compartmental' one of dealing with the church according to its separate structural areas — nave, chancel, transepts, aisles — each as an entity. Although this method inevitably involves repetition in architectural comment, it can be serviceable if used in conjunction with the kind of diagrammatic sketch mentioned earlier. In fact, if this method is used, the sketch should come first in this section of the guide in juxtaposition to a textual explanation preferably confined to one page. It is also important that the commentary should illustrate what uses each part of the church served for both clergy and laity, since essentially architecture is about the art of forms in space — that is forms significant of their function. This relationship within the body of the church, made clear in a guide, will put life and meaning not merely into any description of the architectural organisation of a church but also into the concept of it as a social organism.

The third possible approach is one which may be called 'custodial'. This means taking the visitor hand-in-hand as it were on his perambulation — 'first left into the north aisle, then back and left into the chancel' and so forth. This method of guiding may perhaps be criticised as too fussy and having a tendency to put the visitor into leading-strings, but its effect upon the 'inner eye' is rather like that of a cinema film and inherent in it is the delighted surprise of a succession of discoveries. In an unfamiliar place, surveying things hitherto unseen, the tutelage of kindly direction may not be resented but rather welcomed as a friendly expression of interest in the visitor and his pleasure. Apart from the human qualities of this approach, there is a world of difference for the lay visitor in being told that 'the windows in the north aisle are of such-and-such a date' and being told that those windows confronting him, may be understood as being of that date because of certain features identified in their design.

Notes on such special features and church furniture as brasses, stained glass, sepulchral monuments and their epigraphy, plate and other ornaments should be separated from the main description of the interior for these are topics of specialist interest which may indeed be the only concern of some visitors. Others will certainly not be inconvenienced by having them treated apart and there is no objection to setting down this information in the form of summary notes.

The history of the church congregation is something that almost never forms part of church guides. The nearest that a few come to meeting such a requirement is the provision of oddities and crudities, bizarre anecdotes and records of exceptional longevity. There was not a hundred-and-fifty year old Thomas Parr in every English village and the most important business of the vestry was not culling a rich annual harvest of decapitated sparrows. This kind of information is not only unedifying and unrepresentative; it is even vaguely insulting to those ordinary decent folk who have always been a third of 'the church'. On the other hand the writing of their history does not mean detailed demographic analyses, nor does it mean an exclusive catalogue of the soul-redeeming benefactions of the local aristocracy and landed gentry, who probably had far better reason, if mindful of Biblical texts, to be apprehensive of the uncertainty of eternal blessedness than those who sat in the back pews and were unable to afford posthumous memorials of ostentatious piety. What would not come amiss is some comment on local occupations, on changes in social structure, on new industries established locally and their effects on the composition of congregations and particularly on the identity of church office-holders and members of the vestry when it was the effective instrument of local government before 1894. Matters of vicarial or rectorial care should also receive some comment as

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also should any effects of variations in pastoral discipline or the introduction of unfamiliar liturgical practices. Relations between squire and incumbent are also important especially where the squire was also the patron of the living. Much of this information can be gathered from vestry minute books and from a scrutiny of parish registers.

Parish records remaining in the case of the church should be listed and the list supplemented by a statement of the charges considered appropriate for their consultations. Some searchers have had nasty shocks in church vestries and the inclusion of such information may well save situations of embarrassment. Records surrendered to the local County Record Office should also be listed along with the address, telephone number and opening-hours of that office.

Lists of incumbents and sometimes of churchwardens appear in some church guides. Both are largely meaningless to visitors. Some of the churchwardens may figure in that part of the guide devoted to the history of the congregations but incumbents should really be separately treated. The only exception to this general observation is those who at some time in their lives were of national importance but for most a separate board or leaflet available within the church should suffice. There is rarely any coherent story to be drawn from a succession of vicars or rectors and a simple list of names is not history. Nevertheless separate studies of incumbents have been written (for example, C. Martin, 1952).

An account of the churchyard should follow next in order. It is here that the tombs and their architecture, valuable — along with some of the sepulchral monuments and memorial plaques inside the church — as our unique heritage of *popular* architectural tastes and traditions, should be studied³. This study should be understood as something quite different and distinct from the archaeological matter of the setting of the churchyard dealt with above as a suggested third section of the guide. Here could be included brief notes on locally prominent families and individuals, for by now the visitor's thoughts should be turning away from the congregational group towards individuals taken from that group to a life beyond this world. The churchyard is the place where individuals are remembered and it is in that spirit that the visitor should walk through it.

Completeness demands that the guide should not lack an index, a bibliography and possibly a glossary. However if these requirements seem to be burdening authorial tolerance to breaking point, it may be useful to observe that their functions may already have been partly satisfied in other ways. Perhaps that list of contents earlier referred to would suffice in place of an index in a work primarily intended for consultation in the course of a walk. Effective lay-out and headings set in heavy type may also partly obviate the need for an index. A bibliography, bearing in mind what would be strictly relevant to a single parish (but not omitting a good general parish history if one exists) is more likely than not to be brief. Finally a literary style both concise and relevant and the use of technical terms only when absolutely unavoidable should much reduce or even eliminate the need for an extensive glossary.

NOTES

1. This point is made by D.P. Dymond (1973). This was later revised by its author as a pamphlet (Dymond, 1977) and both are enthusiastically recommended as an introduction to the subject of writing church guides.
2. For local information see A. Matheson (1976).
3. On this topic the standard work is F. Burgess (1963).

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LETTER TO THE EDITORS

From Miss K.M. Thomas

I am writing to enquire about a photograph about which I would like to know more. It is one of a pair, both mounted on stiff board, neither having a date or means of identification on them.

They belong to the archives of Redland Park United Reformed Church, which was blitzed in 1940. Because of the risk of destruction, the archives were divided up between the deacons, who kept them in their homes, so that some at least might survive. The widow of one of them handed them to me, as I am now Church Archivist, but she knew nothing about them.

The photographs both show two groups of people photographed in the grounds of the same building (and in both they are posed in almost exactly the same way in relation to the building) but apparently at different times. This might possibly be two separate church outings, perhaps in different years, but to the same place and with some of the same people.

The location does not seem to be Glastonbury or Tintern. It would have to be within easy reach of Bristol, probably by horse brake, or it could have been by train, though I feel that this is unlikely. With no Severn Bridge South Wales would have been quite difficult to reach.

It seems fairly definite that it is a Redland Park Church group. In the two photographs members of the Wills, Harris and Tribe families, all strongly linked with our church, have been identified. In the photograph illustrated, Mr. Alfred Tribe appears on the extreme right in the second row (with the drooping moustache). He died in 1913 in his forties, or fifties, and in the photograph he might be in his twenties (he also appears in the other photograph). Above him, on the extreme right of the third row (peeping out of the archway) is Mr. Norman Wills,



Plate 2

son of S.D. Wills and grandson of H.O. Wills. He moved to Weston-super-Mare in 1916 and died in 1948. I don't know what his age was. In the centre of the third row from the top, is the bearded figure of Mr. Samuel Day Wills, son of H.O. Wills, surrounded by some of his daughters. He was born on March 14th 1837 (my only firm date). His daughters appear to be still school girls, which might suggest the photographs are in the 1880's or 1890's?

Another mystery is why the minister, the Rev. Urijah Rees Thomas (1862 - 1901) isn't in either of the photographs, unless he was suffering from one of his recurring illnesses. The fountain and clock at the top of Blackboy Hill are a memorial to him.

I would be very interested to know the location where the photograph was taken, or any details that readers may recognise. The costume should give us some guide as to the date.

Miss K.M. Thomas,
168, Brynland Avenue,
Bishopston,
Bristol BS7 9DY.

Editors' comments: We made one or two enquiries about Miss Thomas' photographs and have come up with a few suggestions. Miss Cleo Witt, Curator of Applied Art of Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery, felt that the very wide leg-of-mutton sleeves shown in both photographs dated them fairly firmly between about 1895 and 1898. She also commented that all the younger people in the group were able to dress quite fashionably as a whole. Another suggestion was that the site of the photograph might possibly be Chepstow Castle — were trips across the Estuary popular at this time? It is possible that if any old parish magazines survive that they might itemise parish outings of this period? A final suggestion concerned the absence of the Rev. Urijah Rees Thomas, one we would like to think might be the explanation. Perhaps he took the photograph? We are also happy to be able to reproduce both Miss Thomas' photographs. The photograph referred to is Plate 2.



Plate 3

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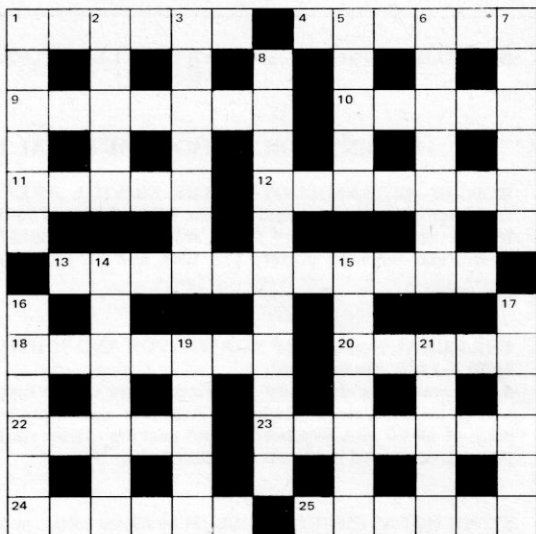
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ACROSS

1. Beside misery, there's death in it (6).
2. Frowns — but partly stays the same (6).
9. Could be "Wroc's — or a sort of bird's — nook of land" (7). *
10. Is she learning to follow the fashion? (5)
11. The occasion's quite flat before a cuppa! (5)
12. There's nothing in 1 Down (or up) to make an ancient forest name (7). *
13. "Drogo's stoney estate" (7, 4). *
18. A confused din — of a short hookah? (1, 6).
20. Real beginner is in a mess here ... (5) (anag.) *
22. ... and here a holy man might make cheese! (5) *
23. Do a turn in it (7) (anag.)
24. "Island belonging to nuns — or to Nunna" (6). *
25. Moves slowly — foot by foot? (6).

DOWN

1. British river-name for a black stream (6). *
2. Sounds as if it's only a lake village (5). *
3. Where the ox pants in confusion? (7) (anag.) *
5. In came Lancelot — not quite to Arthur's palace! (5). *
6. Sounds like an order to marry again! (7). *
7. Not liquids (6).
8. A snug Lab/Tory coalition (11) (anag.) *
14. "Estate on the River Tone" (7). *
15. Fenny ————— is one of many (7). *
16. There is more than one in NATO (6) (anag.)
17. Wide open spaces in Norfolk (6). *
19. French maid from West (and East?) German city (5).
21. East ————— seems like fifty 25 across? (5). *

* = Place-names, mainly, but not necessarily, in Somerset.

NOTEBOOK



..... THE EARLY HISTORY OF CORSTON

During 1980 Corston Church Council decided to celebrate 800 years of history with an exhibition. A great deal of historical research and local information was collected, coordinated, and assembled in the church for the appreciation of the villagers, the exhibition being on view from 20th – 27th of November. Also as part of the celebration, on 15th November, John Haddon produced an historical entertainment entitled "Corston Chronical" also shown in the church. As a result of this it seems a useful point at which to note one or two Anglo-Saxon and early medieval signposts in the history of Corston, as well as a pleasing detail that has turned up on a manuscript from Bath Abbey.

The area around Corston is known to have been inhabited since prehistoric times, but the settlement at Corston itself may have originated as a Romano-British farmstead under the protection of the prosperous villa estate at what is now Newton St. Loe. However, the first written references to Corston as such are not until the 10th century, when it is mentioned in three Anglo-Saxon charters dated AD 941, 956 and 972 respectively (BCS 767, 957 and 1287). The first of these relates to land *aet Corsantune*, that is, 'at the estate on the river *Corse*'. The river-name itself is a British one, being the same as the Welsh word *cors*, 'reed' or 'bog'.

These charters record the granting of land by the king, and, in so doing, they list the boundary points of the estate in question. This can be very useful for anybody researching the history of a parish. Some of the names mentioned in the bounds of Corston survive, but those that do not are perhaps even more interesting. For instance two specific boundary stones are mentioned, of which no traces have yet been found: *cilda stan* and *wimundes stan*, both containing Old English personal names. *Wimundes stan*, in another charter, was also called *anlipian stan*, 'the solitary stone'. There is one very intriguing name, *ecles cumb*, which could perhaps mean 'church valley', and refer to a lost British church site. However, without further recorded occurrences of the name, it is unfortunately impossible to be certain that the first element was a British or Primitive Welsh word (ultimately deriving from Latin *ecclesia*) and not a later, Old English personal name.

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Transcriptions of these charters can be found in the Somerset Record Society's publication No. 7 (1893). The same volume also contains the transcript of an 11th century manumission, that is, the purchase of a serf's freedom. The document, found in an appendix to a Bath Abbey Chartulary, records how Leofnoth of *Korstune* bought himself and his children out of the abbot's service, in 1085 or so.

A later Bath Abbey chartulary has yielded a fascinating and unexpected detail. The drawing reproduced here appears to show Stephen Maureward, rector of Corston from 1273 to 1321. This portrait of Stephen, if it is he, appears in the margin of the manuscript (BM *Egerton MS.* 3316, f.34), below the heading "tra Rectoris de cor/ston de com Soms ..." (the lands of the rector of Corston in the county of Somerset).

tra Rectoris de cor/
ston de com Soms



I would like to thank Michael Costen and Jennie Scherr for their help in sorting out some of the details of this note.

Sources

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Derek Richards.

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..... THE BRISTOL MUMMY PROJECT

is nearing its most interesting part, when for two (perhaps three) weeks staff of Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery and the University of Bristol will scientifically unwrap, dissect and record the ancient Egyptian mummy H 7386, who it is believed is named Hor-Re.

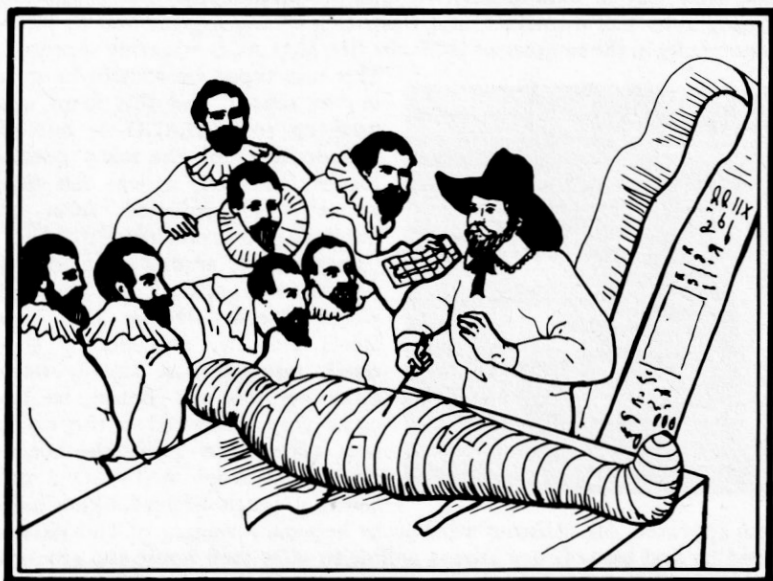
The mummy was found in 1906 in the cemetery at Deir el-Bahri near Thebes. It dates from the XXI dynasty, and it would be interesting to know why it came to be found in a tomb dating from the XI dynasty, nearly 1000 years earlier, the most likely explanation being that the tomb had been re-used.

The X-rays of the body show it to be an adult male, in his sixties, and disposed around the mummy are various packages which will probably be parts of the body which have been mummified separately or amulets enclosed in the wrappings.

The mummy is in a state of rapid deterioration, and as it will no longer be available in a few years time, the decision had to be made to carry out a scientific examination to recover as much information as possible before it is too late. A team of nearly thirty specialists has been assembled in the joint project between the City of Bristol and the University, including Egyptologists, anatomists, pathologists and scientists from a number of other disciplines. It is hoped that a large amount of information might be derived from the project. For example it may be possible to learn more about the process of mummification itself, the religious rites accompanying it, Hor-Re's medical history, blood grouping, his physical features; as well as perhaps something about the environment in which he lived.

The dissection will take place from April 1st, 1981 and it is hoped to relay a video-recording with commentary to the front hall of the City Museum in Queens Road, for public viewing. We plan to report further in the next issue of Avon Past.

Georgina Plowright.



With apologies to Rembrandt and Dr. Tulp!

W. de Bede '81

CONSTITUENT SOCIETIES:

THE MALAGO SOCIETY

The Malago Society was born at a meeting in January 1978 when interested members of the local community were invited to discuss the possibility of forming a local history group. The Society was lucky in that a thriving group already existed at Bedminster Down Secondary School (The Malago Archives Committee) and had been producing magazines, exhibitions and entertainment for over five years. This meant that there was a good base on which to build a new society.

The inspiration behind both the school and the adult groups is Anton Bantock. As Head of the History Department at the school, he has been for many years promoting the use of local history, and a wider interest developed when the school produced a 'home-made' musical based on the adventures of a group of children travelling up the Malago valley. (The Malago is a local stream which flows from Dundry Hill to the New Cut in Bedminster). At this production, the first exhibition of old photographs was displayed, and from this sprang a great deal of interviewing; and finally in the summer of 1975, the first MALAGO magazine appeared.



This was typed on stencils by girls in the school, and this form was used up to MALAGO 4, but to include some of the many photographs collected, it was felt that a more sophisticated form of publication was needed.

Fortunately, around that time a new owner arrived at Bishops-worth Manor House. He was Denis Bristow, and finding that much research had already been done on this old house, he became very interested in the work, and offered to print the magazine — so from MALAGO 5 onwards a much better-looking pub-

lication has appeared. Mr. Bristow went on to become President of The Malago Society, and he and his wife are always willing to offer their house and grounds for society meetings, garden parties etc.

MALAGO continued to be produced by the school-based committee, but during 1977 so many people showed interest in joining, that it was decided to form an adult group. A committee came together, and the first programme of lectures ran from September 1978 to May 1979. The membership has increased from about 80 in that first year to a present total of over 180, and still growing. The average attendance at meetings is 80/90 people. The Society meets once a month for talks and lectures on topics of local interest, and also arranges several outings to places of interest during the year. These have included Ashton Court, Rousham House, Oxford, Tickenham Manor, Dundry Church, Chew Magna Village, Keynsham Abbey, Newton Park, John Wesley's New Room and many others. There is also a trip each September to 'Yesterday's Farming' to see craftsmen at work, heavy horses and vintage tractors. The Society have also supported many events organised by the A.L.H.A. and contributed to *Avon Past*.

One of the main ways of getting local history across to the public is by exhibitions. These have been staged in local libraries, churches and schools; and the biggest to date "Ashton Court and the Smyth Family" was mounted at Woodspring Museum, Weston-super-Mare for the whole of February this year. This caused much interest in the press and especially among residents of Long Ashton village, and it is hoped that a suitable venue will be found in Bristol for this to be displayed again. Anton Bantock and other members of the Society have been carrying out a major project on the Smyth family for several years, and this has taken him all over the country tracing lost portraits and other artefacts, and meeting descendants of the family; about twenty of them managing to visit the exhibition whilst it was on show. Anton has written a book to be called "The Earlier Smyths of Ashton Court 1540-1741" which it is hoped to publish in paper-back this year (pre-publication orders now being taken at £2.00 each). Further books would then follow.

The Malago Society meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month (September to May) in St. Peter's Room, Bishopsworth, and guests are always welcome. Anyone interested in receiving further details of the programme, newsletter or publications should contact Christine Lillington, 23 Grange Road, Bishopsworth, Bristol BS13 8LE. (Tel. Bristol 647578).

Our photographs show (on the right) some Malago members who took part in the 'Victorian' social evening, the military gentleman is Mr. Anton Bantock, next to him is Mrs. Marie Alliston, then the Chairman, Mr. Freddie Alliston and Mrs. Eileen Mirrlees; on the left I can be seen examining a milestone with my daughter Kay during a visit to the folk museum at St. Fagans.

Christine Lillington.



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PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

PREHISTORY OF THE SOMERSET LEVELS

by J.M. Coles and B.J. Orme. 64pp; 46 photographs, 27 figs., 7 maps.
Somerset Levels Project, 1980. £1.00.

This is the best booklet of its type that I have read. To tell the story of the exciting and important discoveries in the peat of the Somerset Levels so clearly and simply requires not only a complete understanding of all that they imply, but also great skill in communication and the authors are to be congratulated on their achievement. In this small booklet they have managed to distil all the detailed information recorded in the series of *Somerset Levels Papers* into a most readable account of these finds without any sign of writing down for the benefit of the non-archaeological reader.

The various trackways are mapped, their structure recorded and their radio-carbon dates given. The information which they reveal concerning the environment in which they were constructed is not the least fascinating nor least important part of the book. The small finds associated with the trackways are well illustrated and there are numerous maps and diagrams.

At the end of the book there are brief accounts of the Glastonbury and Meare Lake Villages discovered and published by Bulleid and Gray many years ago and two paragraphs concerning the excavations at Meare in 1978 by the Somerset Levels project.

The final sentence gives this warning "only if archaeologically significant parts of the Levels can now be preserved, and other parts offered for commercial work, will archaeology be able to continue its attempts to retrieve, analyse, understand and conserve those aspects of our prehistoric past which cannot be found elsewhere in this country".

Norman Cook.

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THE SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO ORIGINAL PARISH REGISTERS
£2.00 (postage 19p) (1978)

THE THIRD SUPPLEMENT TO ORIGINAL PARISH REGISTERS
£3.75 (postage 24p) (1980)

These list the original parish registers which are no longer in the care of individual churches but have been deposited in Record Offices and Libraries, with details of the place of deposit of each. Further supplements will bring the changing situation up to date.

They may be obtained from Miss E.O. Peach, Local Population Studies, Tawney House, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3BT.

HISTORICAL SOURCES IN GEOGRAPHY

by M. Morgan. 153pp; Butterworth, 1979. £2.75.

Sir John Clapham once remarked that "he who would be a good economic historian must first be a competent historical geographer" and this remark applies even more to the local historian, whose interest is inevitably centred on a place or small group of places. As W.G. Hoskins has taught us, local historians must look at the place; indeed, Hoskins recommended that the first chapter in any local history ought to be on 'The Face of the Parish'. It is therefore pleasing to be able to welcome Dr. Morgan's introduction, the more so as he is a Senior Lecturer at Bristol University and often uses examples from the Avon area to illustrate his arguments.

This well-produced and attractively priced book deals with a range of historical sources from Domesday Book to nineteenth century Agricultural Returns and railways, and in general is a reliable guide to these sources and how they may be used. It deliberately omits detailed treatment of industry and towns, which is a pity, and one hopes these topics could be treated in another volume in the same series, together with more extended treatment of the last hundred years which do not get adequate attention. But as an introduction to the historical geography of the medieval and early modern countryside it can be recommended though not without some important reservations.

Dr. Morgan is not at home with Domesday Book: he does not mention the new Phillimore country translations (the volume for Somerset has appeared, that for Gloucestershire is in the press); he believes the fiscal hide was "roughly equal to 120 acres" (an hypothesis disproved by historians before 1900), he also believes that demesne land in 1086 was "land in the direct ownership *and operation* (my italics) of the lord of the manor", which is highly disputable and almost certainly wrong (p. 19). It is also very doubtful if Dr. Morgan's acceptance of Josiah Cox Russell's multiplier of 3.5 persons per family is valid (p. 23): the bulk of recent work favours a figure of 4.5-5.0. Dr. Morgan's continued reliance on J.C. Russell again leads him to assert that only 2½% of the population in 1377 evaded payment of the Poll Tax (p.33): better estimates suggest that this proportion was between 20% and 50%. His description of the Feet of Fines as "a near-perfect system of land-registration" (p. 37) is laughable (their use was voluntary and only applied to freehold land), and curiously he omits the use that can be made of these records for studying land-use between the late 12th and early 19th centuries. 'Rudge' in field-names normally means ridge, *not* partridge (p.53). The Inland Revenue copies of the Tithe Maps and Awards are now in the Public Record Office at Kew, *not* at the Tithe Redemption Commission Offices (p.58). Probate inventories do *not* "begin in 1530 and cease about 1830" (p.66), and much more guidance is needed on the use of this invaluable source. Finally it may be doubted whether the ploughland or field hide comprised "a reasonable average figure (of) 120 acres" (p.149).

It is a pity that Dr. Morgan did not consult with some economic historians before going into print, as most of these errors could have been avoided. On balance, though, this can be recommended to local historians who should gain valuable geographical insights into the reasons why the local landscape and economy has developed as it has.

John S. Moore.

THE FIGHT FOR BRISTOL: PLANNING AND THE GROWTH OF PUBLIC PROTEST

Edited by Gordon Priest and Pamela Cobb. 128pp; 43 photographs, 5 figs., 2 maps. Bristol Civic Society and the Redcliffe Press, 1980, £2.95.

Surely this book must be a warning and an indictment to us all by cataloguing such a formidable list of lost opportunities and bureaucratic blunders, of visionless and insensitive decisions taken since the last war; indeed one wonders whether the vast, albeit well intentioned machinery of Planning has made any contribution to enhancing the quality of life or amenities for our local community.

The editors, Gordon Priest and Pamela Cobb, set out and succeed in itemising a permanent record of the Civic Society and other amenity groups' protests against various development schemes. The report is broken down into three parts – the first outlining the vast rebuilding programme facing the city at the end of the second world war, and the subsequent growth of public protest against the proposed solutions to these problems – from the work of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society begun in 1876 and the Council for the Preservation of Ancient Bristol, through to more modern groups such as the Bristol Architects Forum and the Bristol City Docks Group. A poignant reference is made to Reece Winstone's photographs and record of buildings lost to the city by redevelopment since the 1960's. The second part makes specific reference to a number of developments including: the Outer Circuit Road; proposals for the Avon Gorge Hotel, Kingsdown and the Hospital Board, together with the significant and substantial City Docks area; and illustrates the success of group objection. The third part named 'The Changing Climate' examines the change in relationship between amenity groups, politicians and professional planners under the headings of 'Open Space', 'New Uses for Old Buildings' and 'Urban Renewal'; where the author traces successful trends in development, planning and conservation which "made planning a positive process".

Sadly (although perhaps inevitably as this book is the collective work of several authors) it fails for me to capture the intensity of emotion and sense of outrage that must have been generated to motivate individuals to join together to fight for Bristol.

Though I wholeheartedly praise this retrospective document, can we not perhaps look forward to a more positive 'Broadsheet' or preferably a regular column in the local press to highlight buildings or areas currently at risk, thereby drawing greater public attention to this cause?

Well worthwhile, good value, indeed a must for every prospective 'second' to the champions in the fight for Bristol.

Michael Axford.

SOME OF OUR OLD PICTURES OF MIDSOMER NORTON, PAULTON, CHILCOMPTON AND RADSTOCK

by Chris Howell. 145pp; 1979. Available from the author, Chapel Cottage, Parsonage Lane, Chilcompton, Bath. £6.00 plus 70p postage and packing.

This is a well-produced, attractive collection of old photographs and a few old drawings of Midsomer Norton, Radstock and district. It obviously represents the results of several years of collecting and of painstaking research on the area, for not only are we given a wide-ranging selection of old photographs depicting subjects as diverse as church and chapel life, work and local industries, local society and recreation including sport and the bands for which the district was noted, but in addition the places, buildings, incidents and people in the photographs have been carefully identified. Inevitably with old photographs some have to be studied with great care in order to discern the details, and a reader unfamiliar with the district might have welcomed a modern map as well as the map of 1822 which is reproduced. Nevertheless this book is obviously intended mainly for local people, and as such provides an admirably varied view of life and work in the district.

The book is much more than a collection of old photographs, however, for Mr Howell has also provided a readable text which gives a very personal as well as informative account of the district and makes full use of oral tradition and local memories in showing the manifold changes which have occurred. This is excellent oral and local history and should be emulated elsewhere, for the memories, comments and extracts which have been collected here give just the sort of background to the illustrations which it will soon be impossible to recapture. The photographs are inevitably static whereas the comments and memories add life and movement. We are told of the conditions in the mines that provided most of the work in the area, of the beginnings of the printing industry which has become so important there during the twentieth century, of the shops, pubs, breweries and mills, of roads and railways, and of sports and recreations. We are taken from Sunday School treats and 'Miss Waugh's Bible Class', to the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Jubilees and a visit by the Prince of Wales in 1909, to the local quoits team and the local orchestra. We are also given informative comments about many of the local characters who appear in the photographs.

This is just the sort of local history research which so urgently needs to be done, and Mr. Howell is to be congratulated on this work and on the way in which this collection has been compiled and produced.

J.H. Bettley.

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH AND CITY MUSEUM — A GUIDE TO THE BUILDING AND ITS HISTORY

by Bryan Little. 22pp; 13 plates, map. Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery, 1980, £0.50

This new and attractive guide to St. Nicholas Church is an excellent example of present-day style in church guides, and a world away from the limp, turgid and dusty products too often associated with the *genre*. Bryan Little has produced a lucid and authoritative survey of St. Nicholas Church from the mid-

12th century up to its destruction on 25th November 1940, and of its re-emergence as an ecclesiastical museum which carried off one of the Civil Trust's national awards during European Architectural Heritage Year in 1975. In characteristically polished and deceptively simple style he packs a great deal of information into a limited space. He not only describes the development and structure of the church in expert detail, but sets the building firmly in its context of the city outside; the diversion of the R. Frome 1240-47, the 18th century parishioners living in Queen Square, and the contrivances and worries of post-World War II years. The text is boldly broken up into sections with lettered headings, which help to prevent the reader having any sensation of mental indigestion; although it is a pity that a heading seems to have been omitted on p.4, so that over half the 'Late Medieval Church: c.1375-1400' is in fact concerned with the 18th century. It is a pity, also, that William Worcestre is misspelt Worcester.

Bryan Little's text occupies the first half of the booklet, while 13 plates illustrating the building and its present museum role occupy the whole of the second half, with informative captions to follow (p.20-21): a neat and satisfying balance. The booklet has a splendidly stout cover, with an attractive two-tone illustration on the front and — excellent idea — a complete map of medieval Bristol with all its churches inside the back, facing a full page for the reader's own additional 'Notes'. This distinctive layout, and the rather aggressively 'stylish' design, lead one to hope that this may be the first of a whole series of new guides to the various Bristol museums, or to the other Bristol churches, all using this same easily recognisable house-style. If so, this guide to St. Nicholas sets a fine standard for others to follow.

Frances Neale.

CITY OF BRISTOL MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY SHOP

As the new season progresses, The Museum shop will be displaying new ranges of interesting items. One 'forthcoming attraction' we are particularly excited about is an informative wall-chart specially designed to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the second design competition which lead (eventually) to the construction of The Clifton Suspension Bridge. Look out for this new chart which we expect to sell for about 75 pence.

Meanwhile we have a good selection of local history booklets among which are several new titles.

St. Nicholas Church and City Museum, a Guide *Bryan Little*. City Museum & Art Gallery. 50p.

William Hogarth's Bristol Altar-piece *M.J.H. Liversidge*. Bristol Branch of The Historical Association. 60p.

The Bristol High Cross *M.J.H. Liversidge*. Bristol Branch of the Historical Association. 60p.

Robert Southey and Bristol *Basil Cottle*. Bristol Branch of the Historical Association. 60p.

Excavations at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol *Roger Price*. City Museum and Art Gallery and the Redcliffe Press. 70p.

When looking for gifts for personal or presentation occasions why not see what we can offer, first?



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